THE DIRECTOR.

No. 22. SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 1807.

One great amusement of our household was,
In a huge crystal magic globe to spy,
Still as you turn'd it, all things that do pass
Upon this ant-hill earth.
THOMSON's Castle of Indolence, Stanz. xlix.

IT was in one of those beautiful evenings of autumn, when the stillness of the surrounding scene, and the varied hues of the distant landscape, excite an indescribable pleasure in the contemplative mind, that I retired to an alcove, situated on an eminence at the extremity of my garden. In my way thither, a thousand amusing objects pre-

sented themselves to my view—the reapers were carrying away their last harvest load, the hedges were beginning to shew their winter-fruit berries, and, what was still more interesting to my feelings, I could discover numerous groups of gleaners, picking up the grain which the husbandmen had spared, and, with their loads upon their heads, marching homewards in all the glee of perfect happiness.

I HAD left upon my table Sir Thomas More's '*Commonwealth of Utopia*,' which had occupied me for the last two hours; and, meditating upon the fanciful things contained in that performance, I sat down quietly within my alcove, resolved to indulge the variety of imagery which was crowding upon my fancy. In this thoughtful mood, interrupted only by the hum of the beetle, and warbling of the robin, I continued probably about half an hour, when sleep surprised me; and in my slumber I was amused by the following dream.

METHOUGHT I was gently lifted from the ground into the air, by a being of very superior size, but of an inexpressible sweetness of countenance. Although astonished by the singularity of my situation, I was far from giving way entirely to fear; but, with a mixture of anxiety and resignation, awaited the issue of the event. My Guide or Protector, (for so this being must now be called) looked upon me with an air of tenderness, mingled with reproof; intimating, as I conceived, that the same superior Power which had thus transported me above my natural element, would of necessity keep me in safety. This sentiment quieted my apprehensions.

WE had travelled together through an immensity of space, and could discover the world below as one small darkened spot, when my guide interrupted the awful silence that had been preserved, by the following exclamation: 'Approach, O man! the place of thy desti-

nation—compose thy perturbed spirits, and let all thy senses be awakened to a proper understanding of the scene which thou art about to behold.' So saying, he moved along with an indescribable velocity; and while my eyes were dazzled by an unusual effulgence of light, I found myself at rest upon a solid seat—formed of crystal of prodigious magnitude.

My guide then fixed himself at my right hand, and after a vehement ejaculation, accompanied by gestures, which had the effect of enchantment upon me, he extended a sceptre of massive gold, decorated with emeralds and sapphires. Immediately there rose up a Mirror of gigantic dimensions, around which was inscribed, in fifty languages, the word 'Truth.' I sat in mute astonishment. Examine,' said my guide, with a voice the most encouraging imaginable, 'examine the objects reflected upon the surface of this mirror.' 'There are none that are discernible to my eyes,' I replied.

'Thou shalt soon be gratified then,' resumed this extraordinary being (with a severe smile upon his countenance) 'but first let me purge thine eyes from those films of prejudice which, in the world you inhabit, are apt to intercept the light of TRUTH.' He then took a handful of aromatic herbs, and rubbing them gently upon my temples, gave me the power of contemplating the objects before me.

WONDERFUL indeed was this scene; for upon the surface of the MIRROR the whole world seemed to be reflected! At first, I could not control my feelings; but like a child that springs forward to seize an object greatly beyond its grasp, I made an effort to leave my seat, and to *mingle* in the extraordinary scene. Here, however, my guide interfered—and in a manner the most peremptory and decisive, forbade all further participation of it. '*View* it attentively,' replied he, 'and impress firmly on thy

memory what thou shalt see—it may solace thee the remainder of thy days.'

The authoritative air with which these words were delivered, quite repressed and unnerved me. I obeyed, and intently viewed the objects before me. The first thing that surprised me was, the representation of all the metropolitan cities of Europe. London, Paris, Vienna, Berlin, and Petersburg, in particular, occupied my attention; and, what was still *more* surprising, I seemed to be perfect master of every event going on in them—but more particularly of the transactions of *Bodies Corporate.* I saw Presidents in their chairs, with Secretaries and Treasurers by their sides, and to whatever observations were made, the most implicit attention was paid. Here, an eloquent Lecturer was declaiming upon the beauty of morality, and the deformity of vice: there, a scientific Professor was unlocking the hidden treasures of nature, and explaining the va-

rious systems by which air, and earth, and fire, and water, counteract and sustain each other!

AGAIN I turned my eyes, and, contiguous to this scene, viewed the proceedings of two learned sister Societies, distinguished for their labours in *Philosophy* and *Antiquity*. Methought I saw the spirits of NEWTON and of DUGDALE, looking down with complacency upon them, and congratulating each other upon the *general* progress of civilization since they had ceased to mix among men. 'These Institutions,' observed my guide, 'form the basis of rational knowledge, and are the source of innumerable comforts: for the *many* are benefited by the researches and experiments of the *few*. It is easy to laugh at such societies, but it is not quite so easy to remedy the inconveniencies which would be felt, if they were extinct. Nations become powerful in proportion to their wisdom; it has uniformly been found that where philosophers lived, and learned men wrote,

the arts have flourished, and heroism and patriotism have prevailed. True it is, that discrepances will sometimes interrupt the harmony of public bodies. But why is perfection to be expected, where every thing must necessarily be imperfect? It is the duty of man to make the *nearest approaches* to public and private happiness. And if, as with a sponge, he wipe away such establishments, genius has little incentive to exertion, and merit still less hope of reward. Now cast your eyes on a different scene.' I obeyed, and, within the same city, saw a great number of Asylums and Institutions for the ignorant and helpless. I saw youth instructed, age protected, the afflicted comforted, and the diseased cured. My emotions at this moment were wonderfully strong—they were perceived by my guide, who immediately begged of me to consider the manner by which *epidemic maladies* were prevented or alleviated, and especially how *the most fatal of them* had been arrested in its progress.

I attentively examined the objects before me, and saw thousands of smiling children and enraptured mothers walking confidently 'midst plague and death! I saw them, secure in the *charm* which had been afforded them by the most useful, the most nutritious of animals! 'Enough,' exclaimed my guide, 'thou see'st here the glorious result of a philosophic mind, gifted with an unabatable ardour of experiment. Thou wilt acknowledge, that, compared with the triumph which SUCH A MIND enjoys, the conquests of heroes are puerile, the splendour of monarchy is dim!' During this strain, I fancied I could perceive the human being, alluded to by my guide, retire apart in conversation with *another distinguished friend of humanity*, by whose unwearied exertions the condition of many thousand poor people had been meliorated.

'THERE is yet,' resumed my guide, 'another scene equally interesting with the preceding—from a pure morality

flows a pure religion—look therefore on those engaged in the services of CHRISTIANITY.' I looked, and saw innumerable of my fellow creatures prostrate in adoration before their Creator and Redeemer. I fancied I could hear the last strains of their hallelujahs ascending to the spot whereon I sat. 'Observe,' said my Protector, 'all do not worship in the same manner, because all believe not in the same creeds; but the intention of each may be pure: at least, common charity teaches us thus to think, till some open act betray a malignity of principle. Toleration is the vital spark of religion—arm the latter with the whips of persecution, and you convert her into a fiend scattering terror and dismay! In your own country you enjoy a liberality of sentiment beyond every other on the face of the globe. Learn to be grateful for such an inestimable happiness.'

THESE words had hardly escaped my guide, when I was irresistibly led to look on another part of the Mirror,

where a kind of imperial magnificence, combined with the severest discipline, prevailed. 'You are contemplating,' resumed my preternatural Monitor, 'one of the most interesting scenes in Europe. See the effect of revolutionary commotions! While you view the sable spirit of the last monarch of France, gliding along, at a distance, with an air of sorrow and indignation: while you observe a long line of legitimate princes, exiled from their native country, and dependent upon the contributions of other powers—mark the wonderful, the unparalleled reverse of human events! and acknowledge, that, the preservation of the finest specimens of art, the acquisition of every thing which can administer to the wants of luxury, or decorate the splendour of a throne—the acclamations of hired multitudes or bribed senates, can reflect little lustre on THAT CHARACTER which still revels in the frantic wish of enslaving the world! It is true, you see, yonder, Vienna and Berlin, bereft of their antient splendour, and bowing, as

it were, at the feet of a despot—Had these latter countries kept alive one spark of that patriotism which so much endears to us the memories of Greece and Rome—had they not, in a great measure, become disunited by factions, we might, even in these days, however degenerate, have witnessed something like that patriotic energy, which was displayed in the bay of Salamis, and on the plains of Marathon. Europe may yet be propped—but, without the pillars of England and Russia, I fear all confederacies are inefficient.'

My guide perceiving me to be quite dejected during these remarks, directed my attention to another part of the Mirror, which reflected the transactions of the Western and Eastern world.

At first, a kind of *mist* spread itself upon the glass, and prevented me from distinguishing any object. This, however, gradually dissolved, and was succeeded by a thick, black smoke, which

involved every thing in impenetrable obscurity. Just as I was about to turn to my guide, and demand the explanation of these appearances, the smoke rolled away, and, instantaneously, there flashed forth a thousand bickering flames. 'What,' cried I, 'is the meaning of these objects?' 'Check, for one moment, your impatience, and your curiosity shall be gratified,' replied my guide. I then disdinctly viewed thousands of *Black Men*, who had been groaning under the rod of oppression, starting up in all the transport of renovated life, and shouting aloud 'WE ARE FREE! One tall commanding figure, who seemed to exercise the rights of a chieftain among them, gathered many tribes around him, and addressed them in the following few, but comprehensive words: 'Countrymen, it has pleased the Great God above, to make man instrumental to the freedom of his fellow creatures. While we lament our past, let us be grateful for our present, state: and never let us cease, each revolving year, to build an

altar of stones to the memory of that GREAT and GOOD MAN, who hath principally been the means of our FREEDOM FROM SLAVERY. No; we will regularly perform this solemn act, as long as there shall remain one pebble upon our shores.'

'THUS much,' resumed my guide, 'for the dawning felicities of the *western* world: but see how the eastern empires are yet ignorant and unsettled!' I was about to turn my eyes to Persia and India, to China and Japan, when, to my astonishment, the surface of the MIRROR became perfectly blackened, except in some few circular parts, which were tinged with the colour of blood. 'The future is a fearful sight,' said my guide, 'we are forbidden its contemplation, and can only behold the gloomy appearances before us: they are ominous ones!

MY mind, on which so many and such various objects had produced a confused effect, was quite overpowered and distracted. I leant upon the arm of the

chair, and covering my face with my hands, became absorbed in a thousand ideas which such scenes had excited, when a sudden burst of thunder made me start from my seat—and, looking forward, I perceived that the MIRROR, with all its magical illusions, had vanished away! My preternatural guide then placed himself before me, but in an altered, female form. A hundred varied coloured wings sprung from her arms, and her feet seemed to be shod with sandals of rubies, around which numerous cherubs entwined themselves. The perfume that arose from the flapping of her wings was inexpressibly grateful; and the soft silvery voices of these cherubic attendants had an effect truly enchanting.

No language can adequately describe my sensations on viewing this extraordinary change of objects. I gazed with rapture upon my wonderful guide, whose countenance now beamed with benevolence and beauty. 'Ah!' exclaimed I, 'this is a vision of happiness

never to be realized. Thou art a being that I am doomed never to meet with in the world below.' 'Peace:' whispered an unknown voice, 'injure not thy species by such a remark: the object before thee is called by a name that is familiar to thee—it is 'CANDOUR.' She is the handmaid of Truth, the sister of Virtue, and the priestess of Religion.'

I was about to make reply, when a figure of terrific mien, and enormous dimensions, rushed angrily towards me, and taking me up in my crystal chair, bore me precipitately to the earth. In my struggles to disengage myself from this monster, I awoke; and, on gazing about me, with difficulty could persuade myself that I was an inhabitant of this world.

THE sun had now entirely sunk behind the hills; and, as the shades of evening began to prevail, and a chilly moisture to impregnate the air, I retired

slowly and pensively to my study. 'This dream,' said I to myself, 'can never perish from my memory—The MIRROR of TRUTH will always be before my eyes.'

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* The curious collector was, I am sure, too well pleased with the last extract from Mr. Brand's sale of books, to be out of humour with a *further* account of the prices for which some rare articles were sold. He will see that it was reserved for the refinement of these times to appreciate justly the value of 'pithie, plesaunt, and profittable' discourses, and will figure to himself the high glee with which the ghosts of '*Maisters Caxton, W. de Worde, Pynson, &c.*' must contemplate the sharp contentions carried on in Mr. Stewart's Auction Room, between the H's. and M's. and C's. and T's. of the day, for little besmeared BLACK LETTER TRACTS about 'Butchers and Bakers, and Candlestick-makers.'

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things said about the Fleetwood, and Dr. Askew's, collection. I have now

	£.	s.	d.
No. 272. A. England's Parnassus, 8vo. 1600	2	10	0
No. 282. A *Booke of Fishing*, with Hooke and Line, 1600. A Booke of Engines and Traps to take Polcats, Buzzards, Rats, Mice, &c. cuts, *very rare*	3	3	0
No. 283. Archy's Dream, sometimes Jester to his Majestie, but expelled the Court by Canterburie's Malice, *very rare*	1	13	0
No. 337. A new Dialogue between the Angell of God and Shepherdes in the Felde, *black letter*	2	10	0
No. 381. A Dialogue betweene two Neighbours, concernyng Ceremonyes in the first Year of Queene Mary, black letter, with portrait of Mary, by Delarme, from Roane, by Michelwood, 1554	2	12	6
No. 396. A Narrative of an Extraordinary Delivery of Rabbits, performed by John Howard, Surgeon, at Guildford, 1727, and eight more on			

to submit to him an account of books of equal value in point of rarity; and,

		£.	s.	d.
	the Rabbit Woman; very curious	1	8	0
No. 417.	A short Inventory of *certayne idle Inventions*, black letter, *very rare*	2	15	0
No. 418.	A JUNIPER LECTURE, with the Description of all Sorts of Women, Good and Bad, very rare, Lond. 1639.	1	16	0
No. 422.	A New Dictionary of the Canting Crew. The Scoundrell's Dictionary, 1754	0	10	0
No. 454.	A *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*; or, a Quaint Dispute betweene Velvet Breeches and Cloth Breeches, wherein is set downe the Disorders in all Estates and Trades, *with portraits.* Lond. printed by G. P. 1620	2	16	0
No. 462.	Articles to be enquired into by the various Bishops, &c. in their Visitations; upwards of one hundred; a very curious, scarce, and unique collection	2	2	0
No. 476.	A brieff Discours off the Troubles begonne at Franctfort, in Germany, 1554, *aboute*			

considering the owner of them, of still greater interest: for the circumstances by

		£.	s.	d
	the Booke of Common Prayer and *Ceremonies*, black letter, 1575	0	13	0
No. 545.	Austin (Wm.) HÆC HOMO, wherein the Excellency of Woman is described; with Portraits of Mrs. Griffiths and the Author, by Glover. Lond. 1639.	0	16	0
No. 733.	Buchannon (Geo.) Detection of the Duinges of Marie Queene of Scottes, touch- and the Murder of her Husband, and her Conspiracie, Adulterie, and pretended Marriage with the Earl Bothwell, 1598, &c. &c.	0	14	6
No. 802.	Barbiere (John) the *famous Game of Chesse Play*, cuts, 1673. The most ancient and learned Play, called, The Philosopher's Game, invented for the honourable Recreation of the Studious, by W. F. black letter, 1563	2	4	0
No. 1300.	A PLAISTER FOR A GALLED HORSE, *very rare*, 1548. See Herbert's Ames, vol. 1. 581	3	17	6

which they were collected, were of no ordinary occurrence. I allude to the

	£.	s.	d.
No. 1312. A Counter Blaste to Tobacco. Ib. 1604.	0	17	0
No. 1326. Bentley's (Thos.) *Monument of Matrons*, containing seven severall Lamps of Virginitie, or Distinct Treaties, black letter, collated and perfect, a very fine copy, extremely *rare and curious*, imprinted at London, by Thomas Dawson, for William Seres, *extremely rare*	8	18	6
No. 1334. Bert (Edmund) an approved Treatise of *Hawkes and Hunting*. Lond. 1619	1	10	0
No. 1398. Coverdale's (Myles) *Christian's State of Matrimony*, wherein Husbandes and Wyves may learne to keepe House together with Love: black letter, imp. by John Awdely, 1575. A Christian Exortacion unto Customable Sweares, *black letter*, 1575	1	1	0
No. 1405. Cokain's (Sir Aston) Poems of Divers Sorts, *rare*, (for an account of the Author see Mr. Brand's MS. Note) Lond. 1658.	2	0	0
No. 1540. Burton (Wm.) Seven Dia-			

BIBLIOTHECA RATCLIFFIANA; or, 'A Catalogue of the elegant and truly

	£.	s.	d.
logues, black letter, Lond. 1606. George Whetstone's a *Mirour for Magistrates* of Cities. b. l. printed by Richard Jones, 1584.	3	13	6
No. 1542. BYSHOP'S (John) *beautifull Blossomes*, black letter, imprinted by Henrie Cockyn, 1577	4	10	0
No. 1754, Characters (viz.) The Surfeit to A. B. C. Lond. 1656. Dr. Lupton's *London and Country carbonadoed, and quartered in severall Characters*, 1632. Essayes and Characters, by L. G. 1661	4	7	0
No. 2069. England's Jests refined and improved, 1660	2	14	0
No. 2184. England's Worthies. Portrait of the Earl of Essex, made perfect with MS. 1647	3	13	6
No. 2325. Carion (John) the Thre Bokes of Chronicles, b. l. imp. by W. Lynne, 1550	4	10	0
No. 2326. Catharo's Diogenes in his Singularitie, wherein is comprehended his merrie Baighting fit for all Men's Benefits; christened by him a *Net-*			

valuable Library of JOHN RATCLIFFE, Esq. late of Bermondsey, deceased. The

	£.	s.	d.
tle for Nice Noses, by L. F. black letter, 1591.	2	10	0
No. 3523. FAGES (Mrs.) *Poems, Fames Roule, &c. rare*, 1651	5	15	6
No. 3527. Fisher (Bishop) of Rochester. This Sermon followynge was complyed and sayd in the Cathedrall Churche of St. Paule, the body being present, of the most famous PRYNCE KYNGE HENRY 7, the 10th Day of May, 1509, which sermon, with the wood cut, was imprinted by Wynkin de Worde, MCCCCCIX. Thereafter followeth a Mornynge Remembrancer at the Moneth Minde of the Noble Prynces Margarete, Countesse of Richmond and Darbye, Moder unto Kynge Henry 7, and Grandame to oure Soueraryne Lord that nowe is, upon whose Soule Almighty God have Mercy. Wood cut. Emprinted at London, by Wynke de Worde, black letter, *both extra rare*	3	7	0

whole collected with great judgment and expense, during the last thirty years of his life: comprehending a large and most choice collection of the rare old English *black letter,* in fine preservation, and in elegant bindings, printed by CAXTON, LETTOU, MACHLINIA, the anonymous St. Albans Schoolmaster, Wynkyn de Worde, Pynson, Berthelet, Grafton, Day, Newberie, Marshe, Jugge, Whytchurch, Wyer, Rastell, Coplande, and the rest of the *Old English Typographers:* several missals and MSS. and two Pedigrees on vellum, finely illuminated.'

THE title page then sets forth a specimen of these black-lettered gems; among which our eyes are dazzled with a galaxy of Caxtons, Wynkyn de Wordes, Pynsons, &c. &c. The sale took place on March 27, 1776; although the *year* is unaccountably omitted, by that renowned Auctioneer, the late Mr. Christie, who disposed of them.

If ever there was a *unique* collection, this was one—the very essence of Old Divinity, Poetry, Romances, and Chronicles! The articles were only 1675 in number, but their intrinsic value amply compensated for their paucity.

The following is but an inadequate specimen.

	£.	s.	d.
No. 1315. Horace's Arte of Poetrie, Pistles and Satyres, by Drant. 1567. *First English edition.*	0	16	6
No. 1321. The Sheppearde's Calender, 1579. Whetstone's Castle of Delight, 1576	1	2	0
No. 1392. The Pastyme of the People*, printed by Rastell. Curious wood cuts	4	7	0
No. 1393. Cronicles of Englande, printed by Caxton, fine copy, 1480.	5	5	0
No. 1394. Ditto, printed at St. Albans, 1483. *Purchased by Dr. Hunter,* and now in his Museum, which I have seen	7	7	0

* A copy of this book is not now to be procured. I have known £.40 offered for it, and contemptuously rejected.

	£.	s.	d.
No. 1403. Barclay's Shyp of Folys, printed by Pynson, 1508, *first edit.* fine copy	2	10	0
No. 1426. The Doctrinal of Sapyence, printed by CAXTON, 1489	8	8	0
No. 1427. The Boke, called Cathon, DITTO, 1483. *Purchased by Dr. Hunter,* and now in his Museum	5	5	0
No. 1428. The Polytyque Boke, named Tullius de Senectute, in Englyshe, by CAXTON, 1481. *Purchased for his Majesty*	14	0	0
No. 1429. The Game of Chesse Playe. No date. *For his Majesty*	16	0	0
☞ These two last articles are worth at least £. 80, if perfect.			
No. 1665. The Boke of Jason, printed by CAXTON. This, and the preceding article, are supposed to be the second and third books ever printed by Caxton. They are 'rarest among the rare.' *Purchased for his Majesty*	5	10	0
No. 1669. The Polychronicon of Ranulph Higden, translated by Trevisa, 1482. *Purchased by Dr. Hunter*	5	15	6

	£.	s.	d.
No. 1670. Legenda Aurea, or the Golden Legende*. 1483	9	15	0
No. 1674. Mr. Ratcliffe's MS. Catalogues of the *rare old black letter*†, and other curious and uncommon books, 4 vol.	7	15	0

I BEG pardon of the *manes* of 'John Ratcliffe, Esq.' for the very inadequate manner in which I have brought forward his collection to public notice. The memory of such a man ought to be dear to the '*black lettered-dogs*' of the present day;

* In Dr. Hunter's Museum there is one of the finest copies in the world of this ponderous but magnificent folio volume. The wood cuts in it were erroneously supposed by HEINEKIN to have been the first ever executed in this country.

† This would have been the most delicious article to *my* palate. If the present owner of it were disposed to part with it, I could not find it in my heart to refuse him *compound interest* for his money. As is the wooden frame-work to the bricklayer, in the construction of his arch, so might Mr. Ratcliffe's MS. Catalogues be to me in the compilation of a certain *magnum opus!*

for he had [mirabile dictu !] *upwards of* THIRTY CAXTONS* !

IF I might hazard a comparison between Mr. James West's and Mr. John Ratcliffe's collections, I should say that the former was more extensive, the lat-

* In the present *Caxton-loving* age, with what avidity would such a number of this printer's books be sought after! They will rarely ever again appear in one collection so numerous or so perfect. I am well acquainted with the skill and liberality of Messrs. Payne, White, Egerton and Evans—that these gentlemen know and love Caxton as well as ALDUS, FROBEN, and the STEPHENSES—but I question if in the ocean of *English black letter*, they have taken quite so deep a plunge as Mr. Manson, of Gerard Street, Soho. It is due to the spirit and perseverance of this latter bookseller, to notice his love of the *Imprints*, *Colophons*, and *Devices* of our venerable ENGLISH TYPOGRAPHERS. Professor Heyne could not have exhibited greater signs of joy at the sight of the Townley MS. of Homer, than did Mr. Manson on the discovery of Rastell's 'Pastyme of the People,' among the books of Mr. Brand. If I wished for a collection of Rembrandt's or Nanteuil's prints, or of old portraits and black-lettered books, catalogued, I would, with the utmost confidence, resign the whole to the integrity and discrimination of Mr. Manson.

ter more curious: Mr. West's, like a magnificent *champagne*, executed by the hand of Claude or Both, and enclosing mountains, meadows, and streams, presented to the eye of the beholder a scene at once luxuriant and fruitful: Mr. Ratcliffe's, like one of those delicious pieces of scenery, touched by the pencil of Rysdael or Hobbima, exhibited to the beholder's eye a spot equally interesting, but less varied and extensive: the judgment displayed in both was the same. The sweeping foliage and rich pasture of the former, could not, perhaps, afford greater gratification than the thatched cottage, abrupt declivities, and gushing streams of the latter. To change the metaphor—Mr. West's was a magnificent repository, Mr. Ratcliffe's a choice cabinet of gems.

Of some particulars of Mr. Ratcliffe's life, I had hoped to have found gleanings in Mr. Nichols's Anecdotes of Bowyer; but his name does not even appear in the index; being probably reserved for the second forth-coming enlarged

edition. Meanwile it may not be uninteresting to remark, that, like another MAGLIABECHI*, he imbibed his love of reading and collecting from the accidental possession of scraps and leaves of books. The fact is, Mr. Ratcliffe once kept a *chandler's shop* in the Borough; and, as is the case with all retail traders,

* 'Magliabechi's parents were of so low and mean a rank, that they were very well satisfied when they had got him into the service of a man *who sold herbs and fruit*. He had never learned to read; and yet he was perpetually poring over the leaves of old books, that were used as *waste paper* in his master's shop. A bookseller, who lived in the neighbourhood, and who had often observed this, and knew the boy could not read, asked him one day, "What he meant by staring so much on printed paper?" He said, "that he did not know how it was, but that he loved it of all things—that he was very uneasy in the business he was in, and should be the happiest creature in the world, if he could live with him, who had always so many books about him."' See the life of this extraordinary man, printed at Strawberry Hill, in 1758, 8vo. A curious, and rather scarce, little volume. MAGLIABECHI lived to become librarian to the Grand Duke of FLORENCE, and had his fame extolled by such men as Crescembeni, Moreri, Lavocat, and Salvini. He was called 'The Universal Library.' 'A Prodigy of Learning,' &c. &c.

had great quantities of old books brought to him to be purchased at so much *per pound!* Hence arose his passion for collecting the *black letter*, as well as *Stilton cheeses;* and hence, by unwearied assiduity and attention to business, he amassed a sufficiency to retire within the precincts of his library, instead of his shop; and to live, for the remainder of his days, on the luxury of old English literature.

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